

# **Small Business Beat**

News from the Michigan SBA Office

Fall 2008

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## **FEDERAL RESERVE BANK SMALL BUSINESS CONFERENCE**

We all know that small businesses are a valuable and integral part of a robust economy. With that in mind, on November 13th the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago will sponsor a free one day conference entitled "Small Business - The Future." This event will feature discussions with business owners, industry professionals, government officials and academia on strategies for small business success. It will be held at the Fed's Detroit Branch starting at 8:00 a.m.

## **5th Annual Michigan Celebrates Small Business Event**

**April 30, 2009**

### **Great Entrepreneurs are Driving Michigan's Economy**

Do you know of a company on the rise? A small business that has staying power, has overcome adversity, or demonstrates creativity and imagination? A company that has made a real impact on Michigan's economy? Do you know of someone who supports small business by going above and beyond the call of duty?

On April 30, 2009, we will honor outstanding entrepreneurs and small business champions at the 5th annual Michigan Celebrates Small Business awards ceremony in Lansing, where Governor Jennifer Granholm will speak.

Among others, SBA is seeking nominations for the following awards:

**Small Business Awards**

and concluding at 4:00 p.m. Reservations are required and can be made by calling Carla McCracken at (313) 964-6010.

### **Franchise Opportunities Seminar for Women and Minorities**

On November 19th, the first Detroit Area Franchise Opportunities Seminar for Women and Minorities will be held.

The program, which runs from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., will include Fundamentals of Franchising and many other relevant topics. Participants will also have an opportunity to meet one-on-one with at least 15 franchise systems from across the country representing various industries.

Registration is \$20 and includes continental breakfast and session materials. The first 100 paid registrants will receive a free gift on the day of the seminar.

Space is limited, so

- Small Business Person of the Year
- Family-Owned Business of the Year
- Small Business Exporter of the Year
- Young Entrepreneur of the Year

#### **Small Business Champion Awards**

- Financial Services Champion of the Year
- Home-Based Business Champion of the Year
- Minority Small Business Champion of the Year
- Woman In Business Champion of the Year

#### **Michigan 50 Companies to Watch**

In addition, the Edward Lowe Foundation is seeking nominations for the "Michigan 50 Companies to Watch." These are companies that represent all industries and are the backbone of your local economy; companies that create jobs and drive economic growth. Help us showcase their accomplishments.

For more information and to nominate a candidate, please [click here](#).

### **SCORE Clients Honored at Detroit Chapter Annual Awards Luncheon**

SCORE, Counselors to America's Small Business, recently recognized three outstanding clients at the Detroit Chapter's annual meeting in Bloomfield Hills. SCORE, a nonprofit association dedicated to the formation, growth and success of small businesses nationwide, is a resource partner with the SBA.

The principal and founder of Myine Electronics, Jake Sigal, has a proven record of launching over 16 successful consumer electronic products. When he decided to launch his own business, he turned to SCORE counselor Paul Lieberman for help. Jake needed to learn how to talk to potential investors about return on investment, rather than focus on the tech talk he was accustomed to. Jake is currently

register and pay online today at [mmbdc.com](http://mmbdc.com) - under the events calendar, click on networking/special events.

For more information contact:

Tracy Taylor at (313) 262-7516 or [trtaylor@mmbdc.com](mailto:trtaylor@mmbdc.com)

## Veteran Business Conference

Third Annual Veteran Entrepreneurial Training Conference will be held on November 7 at the Holiday Inn Gateway Center in Flint. The V.E.T. conference will provide veterans with information on starting or growing their businesses with expert speakers, service providers, and fellow veterans on hand to share ideas.

William Elmore, SBA's Associate Administrator for Veterans Business Development, is the keynote speaker. Elmore, a Vietnam Era veteran who served in the United States Air Force, serves as liaison between the SBA and

working with Paul in seeking working capital to finish production in time for a scheduled launch of his innovative new audio product in January 2009. Speaking at SCORE's luncheon, he credited his counselor with making his company what it is today, full of promise and opportunity in Michigan's new economy. To learn more: [Myine Electronics](#)

Debbie Scartozzi spent her career as a highly successful marketing manager at Deloitte Services, where she dramatically increased revenues and brought in new business before launching her own marketing consulting company, Checkmate Associates. She turned to SCORE for help and during their first counseling session, counselor Max Lapides recognized the potential that Debbie had and knew she could benefit from joining SCORE's CEO Roundtable. Counselor John Redfield, roundtable facilitator, mentored Debbie. Through her participation, she's developed new clients from the group and implemented strategies that other successful CEOs have shared with her. To learn more: [Checkmate Associates](#)

Beth Collison came to SCORE for help in launching Faith@Work, a bookstore specializing in religious items. Beth attributes her success to the continuing guidance of SCORE counselor Bernard Sullivan. With his direction, Beth's vision of a book store to raise funds for charity was restructured to a more advantageous non-profit status. Open since March 2008 Faith@Work, is a welcoming place to browse through religious books, enjoy coffee and baked goods from the ovens of Capuchin nuns, reserve space for a private meeting and, most notably, make a purchase that benefits Catholic charities. Beth credits SCORE retail expert Earl Kuhlik for his help with merchandising and store layout. To learn more: [Faithatworktroy.org](http://Faithatworktroy.org)

## Escanaba Firm Named Minority Small Business Person of the Year

When John S. Soper Jr. and a handful of tradesmen and managers started doing business as Industrial

the veterans' community to formulate policies and programs that benefit veterans.

Presentations will be made on how to be a successful entrepreneur, small business financing, selling to the Department of Defense and State of Michigan, teaming vs. joint ventures, mentoring, and open market purchases vs. General Services Administration.

Sponsors include:

Boeing  
Goodwill

with participation by:

The Procurement Technical Assistance Centers of Michigan

VetBizCentral

Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce

Michigan Small Business and Technology Development Center

Cost is \$30 per person in advance.

Please visit [vetbizcentral](http://vetbizcentral.com) for more information.

Maintenance Services out of a garage next to his home in 1997, he had no idea what the future would hold for him. But he knew that he had prepared his whole life for the journey that would lead him to be named the Small Business Administration's Michigan Minority Small Business Person of the Year for 2008.

Soper, a former U.S. marine, honed his experience doing construction work and taking on as many general labor projects as he could in order to provide for his young family. In 1988, he began an apprenticeship with the Michigan Carpenters and Millwrights, where he spent eight years working at the highest level for his position. He provided expertise, organization, and leadership to tradesmen, employers and customers. At the age of 31, Soper took the plunge into the world of business ownership and has never looked back.

In its first year of business, IMS, a diversified general construction company, had sales of \$600,000. Within five years, Soper grew IMS to a \$4 million company, providing professional, technical, and construction services to production facilities, municipalities, government agencies, and private industry.

In 2003, IMS was accepted into the SBA's 8(a) Business Development Program, which helps small disadvantaged businesses gain access to federal and private procurement markets. "The 8(a) program is an excellent strategy to ensure profitable growth in a company. There is no other program that could give us the knowledge we have gained as participants," Soper said.

Conrad Valle, SBA Assistant District Director for the 8(a) program in Michigan said, "John Soper and his staff ask questions and listen when we offer information that will help them grow their business. They are an excellent, family-oriented company, dedicated to their staff and customers. IMS is truly deserving of this award."

IMS has expertise in construction projects such as building renovations, restorations, demolition, new construction, industrial construction, millwrighting, piping, and structural steel erection. Customers now include Michigan Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, United States

## Women's Business Ownership Act H.R. 5050 20th Anniversary

Recently, the SBA celebrated the tremendous growth of women business owners at an event honoring the 20th anniversary of the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988.

The pioneering legislation, also known as H.R. 5050, created the Office of Women's Business Ownership, the Women's Business Center program, and the National Women's Business Council.

"Today we celebrate the foresight of those who pushed through the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988 and recognized the promise of entrepreneurship," said SBA Acting Administrator Sandy Baruah. SBA's Women's Business Center program promotes the growth of women-owned businesses by providing business training and technical assistance, helping with access to credit and capital, and

Coast Guard, Michigan Public School System, and Cleveland Cliffs Mining Company, just to name a few. "The opportunity to work with the federal agencies has taught us how to negotiate, increased our knowledge of contracting, and has even helped us in our private sector contracts," said Soper.

IMS was named one of the 2007 "Michigan 50 Companies to Watch" by the Edward Lowe Foundation. But the company isn't just about growth and profits. John Soper and his wife donate to the Escanaba Area High School for an academic scholarship for any student interested in pursuing a career in construction or a related field. They sponsor the boys and girls baseball teams, donate to the local veterans food drive each Christmas, and have donated tools and equipment for playground construction at local school districts.

*Our Belief... SBA is the entry point to help you start, grow, and prosper. We offer customized counseling, specialized financing, and contract opportunities. Through our unique resource network, we provide the tools to help you succeed. We are your Small Business Resource.*

identifying federal contract and international trade opportunities.

The program provided business counseling and training assistance to 148,106 individuals during fiscal year 2007.

From four demonstration sites in 1988 to more than 100 centers today, SBA's Women's Business Centers offer a wide range of innovative programs, training and counseling to give women greater access and opportunities.

There are four SBA Women's Business Centers that serve Michigan. For more information, please visit the SBA web site.

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